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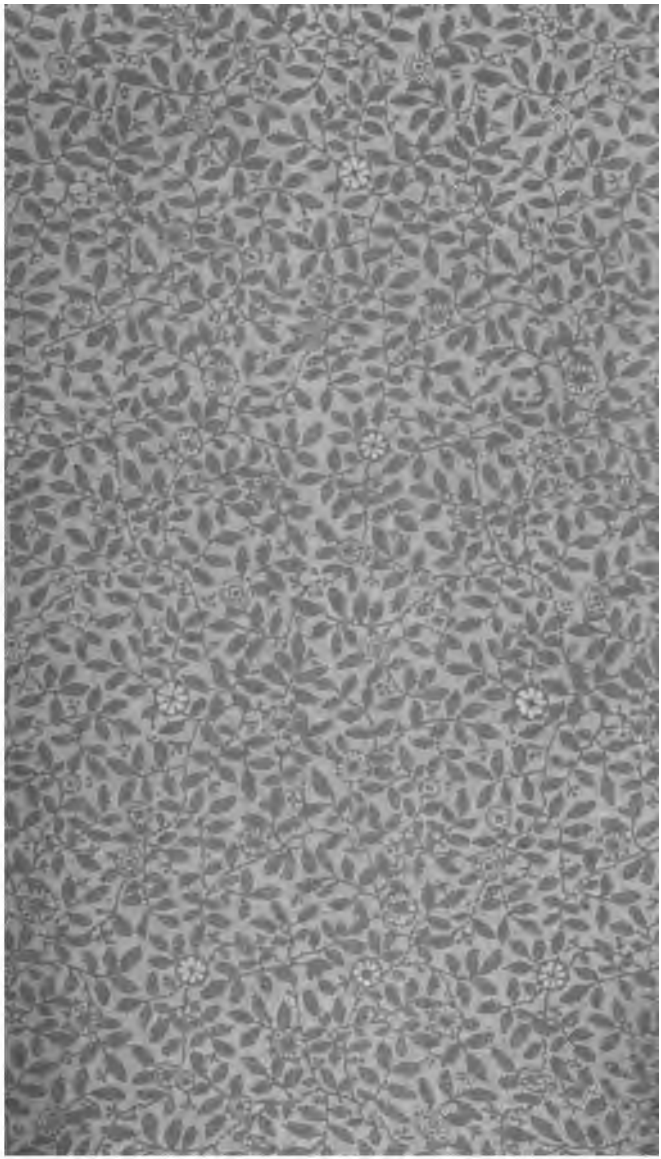
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THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND CIVIL GOVERNMENTS









THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

AND

CIVIL GOVERNMENTS;

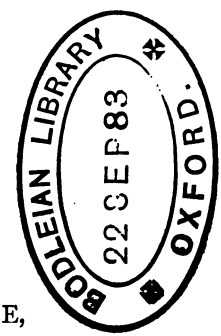
OR,

The Church's Right.

BY THE
REV. JOHN EARNSHAW.

A SIMPLE EXPLANATION OF AN IMPORTANT SUBJECT.





R. WASHBOURNE,
18 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON.
1883.

110. k. 817.



To

OUR HOLY FATHER,

POPE LEO XIII.,

WORTHY SUCCESSOR TO THE PRINCE OF THE APOSTLES,

VICAR OF CHRIST,

"THE CHRIST ON EARTH,"[1]

VISIBLE BRIDEGROOM OF CHRIST'S SPOUSE, THE CHURCH,

IN WHOM, BEFORE THE EYES OF MEN, THE SEER'S SONG

IS VERIFIED,

"AND THE GOVERNMENT SHALL BE

UPON HIS SHOULDER,"[2]

INVINCIBLE DEFENDER OF THE RIGHTS OF GOD,

FAITHFUL CUSTODIAN OF THE "TRUTH AS IT IS IN JESUS,"[3]

WISE DISPENSER OF THE MEDICINE OF REDEMPTION,

THE GUIDE, THE SHEPHERD, THE FATHER OF

GOD'S PEOPLE,

WHO STANDS IN THE FRONT OF EVERY BATTLE,

AND

BEARS THE BRUNT OF EVERY CONFLICT

WAGED AGAINST HOLY CHURCH,

THE "GRACE"[4]

GRANTED IN THESE EVIL DAYS FOR THE CONSOLATION

OF THE FAITHFUL,

THIS LITTLE BOOK

Is Inscribed,

WITH EVERY SENTIMENT

OF

DEEPEST VENERATION, DEVOTION, AND FILIÁL LOVE.

[1] St. Cath. of Siena. [2] Isaias. S. Paul. [4] Mgr. Dupanloup.

PREFACE.

THE following pages, except Chapter VI., were written for *Catholic Progress*, and appeared in several numbers of that magazine during the years 1879 and 1880. They are now reprinted by kind permission of the Editor. The writer has been advised to publish them in the present form in consideration of the importance, especially in these our days, of the subject treated. We see the Pope, the Supreme Head of the Catholic Church, negotiating with civil governments. Many of those governments have representatives at his court, from the formal ambassador to the secret diplomatic agent. The press daily records every scrap of news its correspondents pick up with reference to those negotiations. Thus, though despoiled of the

Papal States, the Pope is still a king. He exercises a real authority over his subjects irrespective of the country to which by birth they belong. The statesmen of Europe bear a plain though unwilling testimony to the reality of the Pope's power, from the fact that, in the government of their respective countries, he is a power which has to be taken into account and reckoned with. Now it is a natural question to ask how this state of things has come about? There are in the world various bodies of Christians, some of them—for instance, the Wesleyan Methodists—have members spread over Great Britain, America, and other parts of the earth, yet we never hear of the supreme legislature in any country deeming it necessary or advisable to send a representative to those who exercise authority in that particular community of Christians, nor even of that authority being taken into account at all. The same holds good of all Christian communities except

the Catholic Church. Whence arises this difference? Why is an exception made in the case of the Roman Church? By what right can the supreme authority in that Church frame laws which bind the consciences of subjects in countries where he owns not an acre of land nor can give a vote in an election, and expect the sovereign authority in those countries to take cognizance of his laws, to respect them, to shrink from enacting any measure which would infringe upon them, and in every case, before doing so, to be required to treat with him in order to find ground upon which both authorities, the Pope's and the civil ruler's, shall be able to stand? Is this authority of the Pope, as Head of the Catholic Church, over subjects residing in every corner of the earth, a legitimate authority or an usurpation? Is it a *right*, and therefore demanding consideration at the hands of the civil government, or is it an encroachment upon the rights of the government?

The answer to questions of this kind is certainly a matter of grave moment. An answer, and it is hoped a simple and convincing one, is here given. It is of vital interest to defend or explain the action of the Catholic Church on sound principles, and this can be done only when we have a correct conception of the true nature and rights of the Church. To bring out this true nature of the Church, to explain simply and briefly the principles which guide the Church in her dealings with the 'powers that be,' and to vindicate her rights, in the maintenance of which her adversaries accuse her of high-handedness, arrogance, and a wish to encroach, is the object of this little work. Cardinal Tarquini, Cardinal Hergenröther, and Mr. Allies have written on this subject admirable treatises; but Cardinal Tarquini's work is in Latin, and for the general public the works of Cardinal Hergenröther and Mr. Allies labour under the disadvantage of being both lengthy

and costly. The present short treatise may therefore be acceptable to many who cannot spare either the time or the means to indulge in larger and more expensive works.

The writer ought not to offer these pages to the public without expressing his gratitude to the Rev. Dr. Müller, Professor of Canon Law in S. Joseph's Seminary, Leeds, under whom he studied the question, and to whom he gladly attributes any excellence which may be found in them.

S. JOSEPH'S SEMINARY, LEEDS.
Candlemas Day, 1883.



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THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

AND

CIVIL GOVERNMENTS.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

To any member of the Catholic Church, however small his knowledge of ecclesiastical history, the present condition of the Church in Europe as compared with her condition in the Middle Ages cannot but furnish a painful contrast. In the Middle Ages Europe was Catholic, and because it was Catholic, kings and princes as well as common folk lived by faith. Not that the civil power in every case ran smoothly with the teaching of the Church. There were times

of oppression then as now. The princes of earth strove hard to enter into the domains of Christ. But, taking all in all, the Church was nourished and propagated, her independence was generally admitted, and if kings were often disobedient sons, they were as often kind and loving nursing-fathers to her children. Now, however, look where we may, we find the Church opposed, her action crippled, and her very existence threatened. Did we not know that she is divine we might fear that eventually the material arm would crush her. She is divine, however, and therefore cannot die. It would be useless, as well as almost impossible, to attempt to enumerate the reasons for this change of conduct on the part of those who hold in their hands the temporal destinies of Europe. It is for the statesmen of Europe to explain their own motives for thus waging war against the Church. It is not our intention to examine the consciences of those statesmen, nor yet to im-

pute motives; but it may be useful to keep before us the principles upon which the Church acts when she refuses to allow the encroachments of the State, or to yield any one of those points which she deems essential. If we know the Church's ground we shall know all that is necessary to meet the charges of ambition, pride, arrogance, and many other equally opprobrious epithets, which writers in every country so freely fling against her whenever she manifests her desire and intention of being free and independent, of enacting her own laws, and of ruling her own subjects in her own way.

The Church has a system of laws which is called 'Canonical Right.' The word *canon* in the Greek signifies a rule. When the Church passed a decree which was in every sense a law, and as much a law as is the law of Queen Victoria for the suppression of duelling, holy Mother Church shrank, as theologians say, from the imperious word 'Law,' and called her law a

'Canon.' The canons of the Church, then, are rules or laws provided for the government and well-being of the Church. If we take the 'Ecclesiastical Right' in its widest sense it signifies a system of laws by which the Church of Christ is ruled, and by means of which the Church is able to preserve herself and to gain her end. Then we have this body of laws divided into public and private. 'Public Right' contains the constitutions of the Church; 'Private Right' directs what each member of the Church must do if he would obtain the prize the Church holds out to him.

A body of laws supposes at once a power or authority which gave that body of laws existence. When there is no authority there can be no law. Nor does it follow that one having power to issue private, can therefore frame public laws. For instance, the father of a family may issue a law binding the consciences of the members of his family, but his power to make laws

is confined to the privacy of his own house; he could not go further, and impose a law upon the town in which he lives. But the Church has power to enact not only private laws [affecting individual members, she can promulgate public laws—that is, laws which bind all her members or a large portion of her members; laws which regulate the intercourse of member with member; which enlarge or restrain the liberty of her members. And it is this latter power which kindles the displeasure of the unbelieving statesmen of Europe. Yet, in spite of opposition, Holy Church exerts her right. If she were to do otherwise she would deny her very nature. This twofold power of framing laws springs immediately from the very end for which the Church exists. According to the teaching of S. Paul the immediate end of the Church is the 'Sanctification of souls;' and as the soul is sanctified by the 'grace' of God, and God bestows that grace principally by means of the sacra-

ments, the Church necessarily requires the 'power of Holy Orders' that her ministers may be duly fitted to confer the sacraments. With this grace of God the members of the Church must co-operate by faith and good works; that is, men must employ their intellect in believing what the Church teaches, and their will in putting their belief into practice. And to do this aright, since man is prone to err, the Church necessarily requires the 'power of jurisdiction' by which she may enable her ministers to direct the faithful, surely and effectually in corresponding with grace, and thereby in obtaining eternal bliss.* But what is the power of jurisdiction but the power to frame public as well as private laws? If the Church were an invisible society, then her adversaries would have some ground to refuse to her the exercise of this power: but being as she is a public society, a kingdom, a divine state, existing in the world though not of

* S. Thom. 3. q. 22. a. 3.

the world, she must of her own nature possess the power of public jurisprudence, otherwise she could neither rule her subjects, nor preserve her own existence, nor gain her end.

CHAPTER II.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH A PUBLIC AND PERFECT SOCIETY.

If the Church were nothing more than a certain ingredient in the State, if she were but a sort of religious influence exercised upon the minds of the subjects of the State, if she had no higher office than that of a Government department, a kind of 'spiritual police,' a powerful weapon in the hands of the chief power, then the conduct of the Church would be inexcusable. We could not understand her claims. To back her pretensions would be rebellion; and to rebel is as the sin of witchcraft, very grievous before God. If, on the other hand, the Church is in every sense of the term what her Founder entitled her, a Kingdom, a Spiritual Kingdom

it is true, yet established in the world, with a constitution, an organization, a government, a polity perfect in every way for the end for which she was created, then, indeed, her conduct is fully warranted. Men cannnot charge her with madness. They may not be convinced of the solidity of her claim, yet when they see the ground upon which she rests, the mystery of her conduct is cleared up, and they are bound to confess that she acts upon principle.

I.

To understand clearly the nature of the Church, we must consider the nature of the Civil State. What gives to the supreme legislature of, for instance, Great Britain, a supreme power over the rights and properties of Englishmen? The Queen with her Parliament is able to pass laws affecting every member of the community, and in many cases, when these laws are carried into effect, the rights or privileges of individual persons are interfered with. Suppose

the aggrieved party complains, does the law give way, or is he obliged to suffer? When a law is passed beneficial to the community at large, the fact that it pinches unpleasantly here and there is no reason for its being annulled. The sufferer may bring his case before the proper authority, and if his claim be just he will doubtless receive compensation. He must, however, yield his original right. Nor could anyone reasonably accuse the State of injustice. All well-ordered minds would agree that the State was perfectly justified in its action, since the direct aud immediate end of the State is not the good of this or that individual, but the good of all its subjects collectively. Private good must give way to public good: the universal is supreme over the particular. In other words, the Civil State is a perfect society.

Now let us see what is meant by a perfect society. To do this we will take the definition of a perfect society, not from some old school-

man of the dark ages, but from one of the ancient philosophers, whose surpassing wisdom has won for him a name of weight in the esteem of all men, and with whose definition no one quarrels.* Aristotle, then, defines a perfect society to be a society whose end is supreme in its own order, and which has in itself every sufficient means to gain that end. Consequently no society is a perfect one, strictly speaking, if it is not sufficient for itself, or if its immediate end is subordinate to the end of another society of the same nature as itself. It is the end that determines the nature of the society. Just as the rational soul determines our material body to be a human body and not the body of a horse, so does the end of a society give to that society its specific character. The end proposed to the Civil State is the temporal happiness of its subjects. The same may be said of numberless other societies all established within the boun-

* Aristot. Polit. I. c. 1, n. 8.

daries of the British Isles; their end is the profit or pleasure of the members. But these lesser societies are imperfect as compared with the Civil State; for although their aim is the temporal felicity of the members, yet it is subordinate to the end of the State. Besides, they cannot attain their end independently of the State. The Civil Government must supply them with means, pass laws for them, protect their rights and privileges, and at the same time provide against their encroaching upon the rights of their neighbours. Hence, in virtue of its supreme power, the authority of the State extends to every part of the conmunity; it enters into the domain of the family, of the trade associations, of the associations for promoting the fine arts, and every other temporal institution.

II.

Our Divine Redeemer calls His Church a Kingdom. Is the Church then a kingdom in

as true a sense as is the kingdom of Great Britain? The Civil State is a perfect society. It claims supreme power, and often exercises that power where it is not wanted, or in an unpleasant manner; but its interference is borne with, because its supreme end in matters temporal gives it a supreme authority. Is the Church a perfect society, or is she only a part of the State?

The Church is an institution actually existing in the world at the present time. There was a period in the world's history when she took her rise. She was founded by the Redeemer of men, and therefore she is a fact, a real institution, and her nature is that which her Divine Founder gave her. In order, therefore, to understand the nature of the Church, we must look at the action of our Blessed Lord in establishing her. That it was His intention to constitute His Church a perfect society, to give to her an end and aim absolutely supreme in

its own order, and to equip her with every sufficient means to accomplish that end, is unmistakably evident from His own words recorded in the Holy Gospels. We here speak of that external power to legislate which the Church claims, by which she is able to pass laws binding the consciences of her subjects, to take means to ensure those laws being put into exercise, to be herself the judge of the sense of her laws, to punish them that trespass against the laws, and to bring them back into the right path by coercion.

Our Divine Lord, in his ever-memorable words to S. Peter, instituted the Primacy of Jurisdiction: 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it; and I will give to thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven; whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound also in Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed also in

Heaven.'* In these words our Divine Redeemer gave to S. Peter full power for the ruling and governing of His Church. And since the Church was to endure as long as the world endures, and the needs of men and the work of the Church were to be the same in the nineteenth as in the first century, that fulness of power passed upon Peter's successors and will continue to do so to the end of time. To weigh the full import of this passage would occupy many pages. The words, however, are so very plain, that it will be enough for our purpose to point out that the possession of the keys implies supreme power; to 'bind and loose,' gives sovereign authority; and 'whatsoever' gives plenitude in the exercise of that power. The word 'whatsoever' is of the widest signification; it puts no limit, it makes no exception. Whatever is necessary for the gaining of the end for which our Divine Lord established His

* S. Matt. xvi. 18.

Church, falls under the power bestowed upon S. Peter, and he and his successors are able to rule, govern, guide and direct it towards that end. There is no mention made of any other power. Not a word about Cæsar or King Herod. He makes no reference to the power and authority of the Civil Government.

Our Divine Lord gives this sovereign, universal power to S. Peter just as we should expect the Sovereign Lord of all the whole earth to do did we know that He meant to create S. Peter His Vicar and to put him in His own stead in the world. If this was not His intention, then His words are very misleading. But there is no mistake. Our Blessed Lord meant what He said. In other passages He confirms the same. 'Feed My lambs,' He said to S. Peter; on another occasion, 'Feed My sheep.' That is, 'Rule thou over all,' for, as S. Bernard says, 'where He makes no distinction He makes no exception.' To the rest

of the Apostles, united with their Chief and dependent on him, the same power of governing and ruling is given. 'Whatsoever you shall bind . . . whatsoever you shall loose.'* And again: 'All power is given to Me in heaven and on earth . . . going therefore teach all nations . . . teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you.'† Observe the word 'therefore.' 'I am the Lord and Master, He says—all power is Mine; this My power I put upon you, to build up My Church among all nations, and in virtue of My supreme authority you shall rule the members of My Church, you shall legislate for them, you shall bind and loose whatsoever and wherever you deem it necessary to gain the end I entrust to you.' This is the plain, simple meaning of the words of our Lord. He subjects His Church to no earthly power. He is Lord of

* S. Matt. xviii. 18. † S. Matt. xxviii. 18.

men and angels, and therefore was able to make His Church a perfect society. This He did when He gave to His Church the absolutely supreme end of sanctifying the souls of men;* and when He gave to her all sufficient means by giving her power, and that His own Divine Power, over whatsoever is necessary to the success of her mission.

* Rom. vi. 22.

CHAPTER III.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH INDEPENDENT OF THE CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

I.

THE Church is a perfect society. From this it follows that the Church is perfectly independent of the civil power. Let us express the reason of our conclusion in this way: To say that our Divine Lord has not sufficiently provided for the welfare of His Church would be absurd. But if the Church be not independent of the civil power He would not have sufficiently provided for the well-being of His Church. Therefore the Church is independent. Without reverting again to that universal, unlimited authority our Blessed Lord gave to S. Peter, and which was a sovereign authority too, since it

was the very authority of Him to Whom all power is given in heaven and upon earth, a moment's thought will show the truth of the principle above stated. For, what is the Church? It is an institution established in the world by God Incarnate. It is the Kingdom of God into which are to be gathered all people that would share in the plentiful redemption of Jesus Christ, and in which are found the well of living waters and the tree of life, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations. The Church is, for erring man, the pillar and ground of the Truth. The Church is the result of the lifelong labours, sorrows, and pains of the Eternal Son of God. The Church is a society upon which the Son of God has put the seal of His divine authority, making it the treasure-house of His infinite merits, and setting it up in the world to continue among men the work which He Himself began in Palestine, giving it a commission to carry the knowledge of His

salvation to the ends of the earth, and to apply that salvation to the souls of men. In a word the Church is the continuation of the authoritative presence of Jesus Christ in the world. 'He that heareth you heareth Me.' 'Lo, I am with you all days.' To suppose, then, that the Wisdom of the Father has instituted a kingdom to perpetuate that work of mercy which cost Him so dear, and yet that He has failed to make the provision necessary for the success of His institution which even ordinary foresight would have suggested, could only be construed into a charge of gross imprudence, which even an irreligious mind would shrink from making. No Christian would dare to fix upon our Divine Lord a policy so short-sighted that the narrowest mind cannot help seeing its absurdity. All God's works are infinitely wise, none more so than the work of redemption. It may therefore be confidently asserted that our Divine Lord, when He established His Church, took every

precaution to provide sufficiently for its perpetual safety and efficiency.

But now the question arises, Is freedom from dependence on the State included in this necessary provision? We maintain that it is. If the Church of Christ is not free and independent by Divine right, then that marvellous institution which for the last eighteen hundred years has filled the world with light and glory crumbles into dust, and the Church, as described in the Scriptures and believed in by universal Christendom, has no existence. Once grant that the Church is subordinate to the civil State, and there will ensue a complete upsetting of the scheme of salvation, an entire submersion of Divine truth, a total overthrow—nay, an utter destruction of the kingdom of Christ. To have given such a constitution to His Church would have been to build upon quicksand. Instead of building upon a rock capable of withstanding the turbulent waves of this ever-changing world,

He would have chosen a foundation which stands or falls according to the breath of human passions.

The civil power is insecure as to its continuance. It is still more unsafe as to its religious opinions. Of those Governments in Europe which profess to be Christian, and whose existence dates from a period prior to the great religious revolution of the sixteenth century, how few retain whole and entire the creed with which they began. How few of them but have undergone a vast variety of changes in matters of faith or of conduct towards the Church. And, supposing the Church to have been subordinate to these Governments, is it possible to conceive that she could have held her own? Could she have withstood the coercive measures of her superior? or have resisted the seductions of material wealth? or have withstood the craven-hearted of her children who, tempted by the prospect of peace with plenty, would

have pleaded for a momentary surrender? Upon no ground could she have made opposition, since the nature of her constitution would have obliged her to submit. Now add to this that the civil power may be in the hands of unbelievers. Men most hostile to the faith may hold the reins of government, men who make a boast of their hostility to religion, who would gladly blot out the name of Christ from the pages of history, and uproot from the minds of the faithful the sweet memories and consoling truths which that name inspires. It would be a difficult task at the present day to find a government altogether Christian and quite free from the influence, more or less, of infidelity, Judaism, and every shade of impiety. Speaking on the subject, Lord Macaulay says, 'We do not, however, admit that if a government were, for all its temporal ends, as perfect as human frailty allows, such government would therefore be necessarily qualified to propagate

true religion. . . . When, again, we look at the constitution of governments, we find no great security for the orthodoxy of rulers. One magistrate holds power because his name is drawn out of a purse; another, because his father held it before him: . . . But it passes our understanding to comprehend what connection any one of them has with theological truth. And how stands the fact? Have not almost all the governments in the world always been in the wrong on religious subjects?' Without endorsing to the full Lord Macaulay's opinion in this matter, he seems to have stated the case fairly enough. And if this was the sober judgment of so eminent a politician in 1839, the same argument against the fitness of the civil State to manage the Church might be urged far more strongly in 1883.

Take the governments of Europe as they now exist, and suppose the Church to be an institution subordinate to the temporal power. In

France, in Italy, in Germany, in England, we have a strange sort of a superior, to watch over, to direct, and govern the Church of Christ. And then give to each government the power over the Church which the German Government, for ten years past, has been straining every nerve to appropriate to itself; and, mark, Germany claims these powers upon the supposition of the dependent character of the Church, a plea which, if true, perfectly justifies its severe measures. Now, let us see the consequence: first, to the State would belong the right to be supreme judge in all affairs affecting the interests of religion and to decide all controversies arising between the Church and State. Next, the State must have the selection and appointment of the parish priests. Hence the faithful could no longer feel confidence in the good character of their pastors, for it cannot be thought that indifferentists or infidels would measure their choice by exemplary life, zeal, or learning, and not rather by the

political opinions of the man. Again, the priest would not have the right to build schools for the children; neither would he have the right to enter those already built. If a priest prove a scandal to his flock, the bishop cannot apply to him the rod of excommunication without leave from the civil authorities. A bishop may not open a seminary for the education of his clergy unless a Government official preside over its internal management and the course of study pursued. And this superintendent may be a rabid infidel. The bishop could not help himself. Then comes the *regium placitum:* — all letters emanating from the Supreme Head of the Church shall be subjected to the scrutiny of a board of examiners appointed by Government, which may consist, as is actually the case at Berlin, of a Jew, an infidel, a Protestant, and a bad Catholic, and upon their decision depends the publication of Papal letters.

The fatal effects of such regulations are self-

evident. They attack the Church in her most vital parts. Any portion of the Church that would accept such terms would by that very act be cut off from the unity of the One Holy Catholic Church. To do so would be suicidal. The bishops and faithful of Germany have recognised the danger which threatens them, and are at this moment suffering, and are ready to suffer, all pains and penalties rather than sacrifice their birthright. By yielding they would indeed enjoy repose, but at the same time they would give themselves the stroke of death. Deputy Malinkrodt in his speech in the German Parliament expressed the truth admirably when he said, 'By passing these laws you will establish peace in the Catholic Church of Germany, but it will be the peace which reigns in the churchyard.' Moreover, this principle once admitted, who can say where it would stop? What would hinder statesmen from pushing their power to the furthest limits? It is plain that the Church

would lie exposed to every danger and to every kind of bondage. In every country the Church would be obliged to trim her sails to suit the religious cast of mind of the powers that be. In place of the One Universal Church of Christ there would be a group of national churches similar to our own Establishment, and in each so-called church a hundred religions battling for the mastery. Hence the note of unity would be lost. The bond of a common communion would be broken. The one faith would go; the one universal worship would fare no better. The Pope would be Bishop of Rome, and nothing more. The keys of the Kingdom of Heaven would be forfeited. The feeble hand of man would remove the rock which Christ our Lord established, and for the eternal stability of which He pledged His divine word. The seamless robe of Christ would be torn in pieces. Instead of the One Holy Catholic and Roman Church spread throughout the world, which by its

wondrous unity is, as our Divine Saviour foretold,* a standing testimony to His Divinity, we should have a Christianity shattered into a thousand fragments, and destined sooner or later to disappear from the world.

Looking at the nature of the Church, considering the words of her Founder, the all-important mission entrusted to her, the imperative necessity of perfect liberty if she is to be efficient for the accomplishing of that mission, the inevitable conclusion is forced upon us that our Divine Lord bestowed upon His Church the charter of perfect independence. It is evidently a Divine truth that is here expressed. The disastrous consequences that would ensue upon any other supposition imperatively demand it. It is a truth the Church has always insisted upon. It is no new-fangled doctrine. In every period of the Church's history, in all her intercourse with kings and princes, she has never

* S. John xvii. 21.

forgotten that her place in the world was one not of inferiority, but of independence. In the time of S. Ambrose, some fourteen hundred years ago, we find her asserting her claims, and vigorously defending them.* 'It is asserted,' says that holy Father, 'that all things are lawful to the emperor (since) to him all things belong. I answer: Do not think, O Emperor, that you have any imperial right on things Divine. Lift not up yourself, but, if you desire a long reign, be subject to God, as it is written, "To God the things that are God's, to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's."† Palaces belong to the emperor, the Church to the priesthood. To you is entrusted the right to manage public affairs, not sacred.' Such is the language the Church has always held. We do not wish to affirm that during eighteen hundred years there have been no time-serving prelates, ready to sell their birth-

* Ep. xx. n. 19. Migne i. 16, p. 999.

† S. Matt. xxii. 21.

right for a mess of pottage. They are but isolated and individual cases. The disgust excited in the minds of the faithful, the severe reprimands they drew upon themselves, only serve to bring out the claims of the Church with greater distinctness. The Church could not forget, neither can she now fail to remember, that she stands in His place in whom alone true liberty is to be found.* As the Viceregent of God, she knows that no earthly power can bind her. As the Bride of Christ, her troth is pledged, nor may she, without being unfaithful to her Divine Spouse, swear fealty or own allegiance to any other sovereign. S. Ambrose bears witness to this truth in the fourth century; Pius IX. in the Syllabus gives the same evidence in the nineteenth. The Abbot Goffrid speaks on her behalf in the middle ages:† 'But when the Church becomes subject to the secular power, she, who

* S. John viii. 36.

† Goffridi Abb. Opusc. Vi. ap. Migne, Patrol. lat.

before was mistress, is reduced to the position of a serving-maid, and loses that charter (of liberty) which Christ our Lord dictated from the Cross, and which, as it were with His own Hands, He inscribed in His Blood.'

II.

The Church is a perfect society and independent of the State. It will be well to guard against an objection which may be made on the ground that two societies, perfect and independent, in one and the same land, are incompatible. There seems to be a repugnance in the notion of a perfect and independent State existing in another State, equally perfect and independent. Such a combination appears an impossibility. Either the State will destroy the Church, or the Church the State. The equality cannot last. But few words, however, are needed to solve the difficulty. For, in the first place, we have shown from Scripture and the teaching of the Fathers that the Divine Founder of the Church

intended that she should be a perfect society, and He gave her a work to accomplish, an end to gain, which far surpasses the very highest end the State could possibly aim at. The end of the Church is superior to the end of the Civil State in the proportion that Divine things excel human, and eternal things outweigh temporal. Why not say, then, that the State is in the Church as a college is in the State? What should hinder us from asserting that the various civil powers are as communities reposing in the bosom of that mighty Mother whose arms enfold the world?

The difficulty is only an apparent one. It arises from misunderstanding the word repugnance. Thus it is a repugnance to have one's eyes open and shut at the same time. If S. Peter had endeavoured to obey the behest of the Jewish authorities, ordering him to preach no more in the Name of Jesus, and at the same time to obey his Divine Master, he would have found it impossible. But when Church and

State both pursue their legitimate ends there is no danger of collision. The ends of both institutions are different. The commands of the State differ from the commands of the Church. When the Church imposes the duty of hearing Mass on Sunday she does not hinder the same subjects from paying the dog-tax. Catholics are subjects of the Church and of the State in an entirely different sense, and the commands given by both fall upon different grounds because the ends are totally different, and so long as each keeps respectively to its legitimate duties, then both societies may mutually coexist, each perfect and each independent.

Again, it is sometimes objected that if the Church be a perfect society, having power to frame laws, judge causes, pronounce sentence, and otherwise exercise a real and external sway over her subjects, she ought, at the same time, to be mistress of the territory in which her subjects reside. Now the Church does not possess

this territory. The Church, therefore, cannot be a perfect society in that complete sense in which the term is applied to the State. The opponents of the Church who thus object do so through want of care in accurately defining the various ways in which one may be said to enjoy the right of territory. In English law we find a distinction made between real ownership and the right of way. A farmer may not be the real owner of an estate, yet may have a real right to pass through the estate or transact business on it. In Derbyshire, for instance, a man may enter his neighbour's property and start a lead mine, with perfect right, with as perfect a freedom as if he were the real owner, and in spite of the reluctance of him whose property is thus invaded. The searcher for lead acts in virtue of a license granted by the Sovereign.

Let it pass then that the Church has not a real ownership over the territories of the Civil State. She has, however, the right of way.

She has the right to enter every kingdom in the world, to set up her tents, to propagate her docrine, to make subjects; and this her right is so perfect, that no Government in the world can lawfully hinder her. The Church has as true a title to exercise her religious ministry in the British Isles, even as our good Queen Victoria possesses in the affairs of State. When Jesus Christ said to His Apostles, 'Going, therefore, teach all nations,'* He endowed His Church with the right to reign in every corner of the earth. And the Church from that day to this has acted upon this right. The Church feels that her title is unassailable, since it comes to her from the lips of the King of kings, through whom alone princes themselves reign and nations exist. Hence S. Bernard, writing to Pope Eugenius III., says: 'A man must needs go out of this world if he desire to find a portion not belonging to your charge.'† The

* S. Matt. xxviii. 18. † 'De Consid.' b. iii. c. i.

Church, then, on the score of territory, plainly lacks nothing that is necessary to the well-being of a perfect society.

Once more: has the Church the right of majesty; and if not, can she be a perfect society? By right of majesty is meant a sovereign authority over her subjects. If the Church had not this right, certainly she would not be a perfect society; for it belongs to the very nature of such a society that its authority be supreme in all matters in its own order. It has been proved, however, that the Church is a perfect society; it follows therefore that she exercises a sovereign authority over her subjects, notwithstanding the texts of Scripture which the adversaries of the Church urge against her. For it is said, our Divine Lord commands His followers to shrink from having lordship over others: 'The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them . . . but you not so.'* He commands

* St. Luke xxii. 25.

them to employ spiritual means, as, for instance, teaching, exhortation, patience, saying: 'My kingdom is not of this world.' They ought therefore to refrain from every kind of coercion.

It is true our Divine Lord forbids His Church to foster the spirit of ambition; He would not have His ministers covet the high places which worldlings eye so eagerly, but He does not forbid His Church to exercise the power He Himself bestowed upon her. Jesus Christ did not stultify His own work; He did not with one breath create the Church and with the next destroy her. Nor does S. Paul seem to have understood his Lord in this sense, for to Titus he writes: 'These things speak, exhort, and rebuke with all authority.'* As for spiritual weapons, common-sense tells us that our Blessed Lord intended the Church to use the weapons most suited to accomplish her object. If Holy Church had to deal merely with pure spirits

* Titus ii. 15.

instead of the frail children of fallen Adam, then, perhaps, she could safely confine herself to spiritual weapons. As the case stands, she is bound to use the means most conducive to her spiritual end. The members of the Church are men, and as experience teaches our natural father, if he desire to have good sons, not to refrain from the rod altogether, so the illuminating Spirit, that guides our Spiritual Mother, shows her the advantage of sometimes making use of temporal means. Hence the laws of fasting, abstinence, excommunication, interdicts have always flourished in the Church. History confirms the wisdom of their use. And even more severe measures have occasionally been found to be very salutary. We answer, therefore, that the Church having to guide men to heaven, Jesus Christ, by the gift of the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven into the hands of His Vicar, intended her to have the plenitude of discretion and of power to employ the means

best adapted to her end. The Church, then, is justified in using extrinsic coercion whenever it promises to be a help. It may also be remarked, in passing, that the principle of the coercive power of the Church is asserted in the Syllabus, Prop. xxiv. But these temporal measures affect only the members of the Church. No Catholic can uphold the theory that all measures are lawful to the Church in the propagating of the Faith. Whilst men are unbaptized, she works upon them by argument and persuasion; but once baptized, then the Church has over them all the rights of a parent, and a divine instinct leads her not to 'spare the rod and spoil the child.'

CHAPTER IV.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH SUPERIOR TO THE STATE.

THE Church is a perfect society, free from dependence upon the civil power. No more reason can be given why the Church should be dependent upon the State than that England should be dependent upon Russia; no reason why the Kingdom of Christ should do homage to the material sword which could not as easily be made to prove the duty of Queen Victoria to swear fealty to the Czar. The arguments urged against the Church's freedom militate with equal force against the freedom of Great Britain; each is a perfect society; each has a supreme end in view; each has ample means to attain that end. If then the Church

is not independent, why should the civil power enjoy full liberty? If the civil power is able to pursue its end without let or hindrance, why should not the Church? The Divine breath which created the Church breathed into her the spirit of liberty; the inspired text which proves that our Divine Lord bestowed upon His Church the plenitude of power, irrespective of all earthly power, manifests His will that the Church should be free, independent, unshackled in the discharge of the important mission He has entrusted to her.

In dealing with the Church of God, however, it is lawful to go even further than this. The Catholic Church may claim, nay, does claim to be not only a society free and independent by Divine right, but even superior to every other society. Here, then, is a step in advance of what has so far been defended. The Church among societies holds the highest place. Of the only two perfect societies in the world,

the Church is the superior. If the nobility of the society be considered, the superiority of the Church is evident upon many grounds: first, by reason of her duration; for if grey hairs demand reverence from youth, or if, as Mr. Gladstone once contended, the title 'Queen of England' is so much superior to the title 'Empress of India,' because upon the former there rested the antiquity of many hundred years, how much more shall the sovereignty of the Church claim the respectful veneration of every civil Government in the world, compared with which, as Macaulay says, 'the proudest royal houses are but of yesterday.' Again, the Church has the pre-eminence because of her extension. What single nation of to-day can boast a universal dominion like that of ancient Rome? And yet, contrasted with the world-wide spread of the Church, the Roman Empire sinks into insignificance. Every corner of the earth is hers; and there is scarcely an

acre of the inhabited world where her power has not been felt and her laws obeyed. Again, it is possible for a man of mean descent to enjoy the possession of vast wealth and broad domain, and yet be disdained by one who, though poor, is very proud of the nobility of his origin. Yet, even in origin, the Church is the better. The Church is the immediate creation of God; the State is God's work only indirectly. It is true the kingly power derives its strength and excellence from God, but it does so only indirectly, inasmuch as God is the Author of nature, and, as it is of nature that a lawful authority preside over human society, God confirms the power of him to whom the people commit their governance. The Church is that society, to erect which God Himself came into the world. The power of the Church is from God as the Author of grace, the Saviour of men, the Restorer of human dignity, the Perfecter of our species on earth, its Crown in

heaven. Once more: look at the object pursued by each. One is the protection of the persons and estates of citizens from injury; the other is the internal sanctification of souls. No two objects more entirely distinct can well be imagined. The former belongs wholly to the visible and tangible world in which we live; the latter to that higher world which is beyond the reach of our senses. The former belongs to this life; the latter to that which is to come. It is assuredly a nobler object to labour for the latter than it is for the former; it is assuredly a grander and nobler object to purify the soul of man, to implant in it the love of truth, of virtue, to render it agreeable in its Maker's sight, than to provide a good dinner for the satisfying of the body. Each is necessary in its own way. But as to which is the nobler object, that which labours for fruit unto life everlasting or that whose last issue will be to perish in the grave, there cannot be a moment's hesitation.

It will hardly be denied that here are good reasons for the superiority of the Church. But granting this, it may still be asked, What is the nature of the superiority claimed by the Church? If it be one that implies subordination on the part of the inferior, then the motives explained above will not warrant it. It does not follow that Zachariah Stubbs, being the son of a night-soil man, is therefore subordinate to the son of the Duke of Buccleuch, nor that Belgium, with an area of some 11,373 square miles, is subject to the mighty British Empire, upon whose realm the sun never ceases to shine. Yet the British Empire and the heir to a dukedom are undoubtedly superior. It is, however, a superiority taken in a general sense; it is a superiority which the most hostile will readily grant to the Catholic Church; but it is not that superiority which implies subjection on the part of others, and which, in addition to the above, the Church of Christ claims.

The Church is, strictly speaking, superior to the civil State if the end of the State is subordinate to the end of the Church. This is stated on the authority of Aristotle, who lays down the principle that all authorities and societies are related one to another in proportion to the relation existing between their ends. The powers of a society are the means which the society has for the accomplishing of its purpose. Every society is endowed with certain faculties or weapons of offence and defence and authority with which to reach the goal at which it aims. If there be two societies, and the end of each be perfectly distinct one from the other; if the ends of the societies have no connection, nor sympathy, nor mutual relation, then neither will there be any real relation between the societies themselves. No matter how great a disparity may exist between them as to size, importance, origin, the greater or the wealthier can demand no true subordination

on the part of the less fortunate. The end of the Royal Society of Artists in England is quite distinct from that of the Dutch snuff manufacturers in Holland. Hence neither is in any way subject to the other. But take the case of the Society of British Merchants and the British Government. Here there is a true subordination. The aim of each society is similar; each labours for the temporal good of the community; and as the aim of the British merchants is subordinate to the aim of the Government, which is supreme in things temporal, so also is the society itself truly subject to the Government. The rights and privileges of the merchantmen fall under the superintending guidance of the State. Here, then, is a clear principle. If it can be shown that the end of the Civil State is subordinate to the end of the Church, it will evidently follow that the civil power is subordinate to the ecclesiastical power. Now, is it so? Is the end of the

State subordinate to the end of the Church? No other end can be assigned to the State than the securing the peace and tranquillity of its subjects. Let it succeed in accomplishing this, and it will have fulfilled the end of its existence perfectly. But the immediate end of the Church is the eternal salvation of souls. Common-sense at once says, earthly happiness must be directed to eternal happiness, and be truly subordinate to it. If heaven is to be gained by our life on earth, then no matter how desirous we may be of making ends meet, of advancing in the world, of laying up against a rainy day, these objects must ever be subordinate to the great final issue which is to crown all things. It is by common everyday actions that men are to win heaven. The State is to strive for the temporal felicity of its subjects in such a measure as shall not in any way interfere with their eternal beatitude. But men do not obtain heaven by human nature.

It is a Divine work. S. Paul says, 'The wages of sin is death, but the grace of God life everlasting.'* Life everlasting is the wages of the grace of God, and grace is the peculiar treasure of the kingdom of grace, the Church of God; of this treasure the Church distributes to the souls of men, which elevates and ennobles their ordinary actions, and gives to the very act of seeking temporal felicity a divine, supernatural quality, which ultimately will have its wages in life everlasting. Therefore the duty of leading men to life eternal belongs to the kingdom of grace. It belongs to divine government, not to human. Heaven is the ultimate issue of a holy life on earth. But no one will deny that it is the special duty of Christ's Church to guide men in holiness of life, to teach them how to gain heaven and to help them in the work. When temporal interests clash with eternal, the temporal must yield;

* Rom. vi. 23.

when conscience or earthly advantage come in collision, conscience must carry the day; when God's service crosses the service of the king, the latter must bow in humble subjection to his Divine Superior. And as conscience, eternal interests, grace, God, are all in care of the Church, the State, with all its multitudinous affairs, must acknowledge itself to be subordinate to and under the guidance of the Church in all matters which touch, even incidentally, upon the moral life of the State. It is plain that, notwithstanding the wide divergence of the ends of Church and State which at first sight appears, those ends have a very intimate relation. Looked at as it is in itself, the Civil State is supreme. In its own sphere it has no rival. Considered in relation to the Church, it holds a subordinate position. Temporal felicity is a means to a supreme and supernatural end, the attainment of which is in the hand of no

earthly king, but of that 'King who is not only Man, but also God, Jesus Christ our Lord, Who, making men the sons of God, brings them into heavenly glory.' And as this Divine King does not visibly preside over His own kingdom upon earth, He has established in it a visible governing body, and to this His visible representative He has given the plenitude of His authority. Hence S. Thomas concludes: 'The ministry of this kingdom, in order that things spiritual be kept distinct from things temporal, is not entrusted to earthly kings, but to priests, and especially to the High Priest, Peter's Successor, Christ's Vicar, the Roman Pontiff, to whom all the kings of Christian peoples are bound to be subject as to Jesus Christ Himself. For thus it is right that they who have charge of preceding ends be subject to him who has charge of the last end and be directed by him as superior.'*

* *De Regim. Princ.* lib. i. cap. xiv.

It only remains to be seen how far this question of ecclesiastical superiority touches the independence of the civil State, and in what relation it stands to the civil Powers of modern times. As to the first question, the independence of the State is in no way interfered with in all those things which are purely temporal. In things of earth the State is absolute master. But granting that the State is a Catholic State, that is, Catholic in the true sense of the words, as, for instance, were the States of Europe in the Middle Ages, then such a State of its own free will falls under the spiritual direction of the Catholic Church. Both Government and people profess the Catholic faith. Now the very essence of the Catholic faith is summed up in the words of our Divine Lord: 'What doth it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his soul?' and again, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things'—that is, things temporal—'shall

be added unto you.' In other words, the very fact of calling one's self a Catholic involves the admission of the superior authority of the Divine power left by Christ in His Church over the human power of civil princes. Hence it follows that a State, of its own will embracing and professing the Catholic faith, lies under two obligations. In the first place, such a State is bound not to institute any law or sanction any custom which can in any way hinder the Church in gaining her supernatural end; and secondly, it is bound to aid the Church by a material assistance whenever she deems such assistance necessary, either for the effectual defence and execution of her rights or the better securing of her end. The State is perfectly independent. In all things which lie outside the end of the Church, the Church neither claims nor has jurisdiction. In matters which involve eternal interests, where the salvation of souls is at stake, there the Church has a

right and is bound to interfere; neither would it be true independence on the part of the State if it were free to disregard her voice and to legislate obstructively to the salvation of its subjects. The Church's power over spiritual things is direct and immediate. Those matters are absolutely in her own custody. In temporal matters her power is indirect and mediate, and is even here a spiritual power, although it is often called temporal because it is exercised by temporal acts. It is spiritual in its origin, springing as it does from the will of Jesus Christ, and spiritual also in its end, as aiming only at the salvation of souls. It is evident then that such a spiritual directive power in the Church does not infringe upon the independence of the State.

Now, however, as to modern States. It is almost certain that at the present day there does not remain one truly Catholic State, that is, as the States of Europe were Catholic in the

Middle Ages. Whilst a few still profess a dubious Catholicity, the vast majority of modern States have almost entirely broken with the Church. How then do these States stand? They neither profess nor desire to be the obedient sons of our Holy Mother; are they therefore set free from every obligation? Do they owe no duties to the Church Catholic? Is the kingdom of Great Britain, for instance, at liberty to ignore the claims of the Church? Of course it is presumed that these States are still Christian in name. For an un-Christian and therefore an unbaptized people would be, as regards the Church, like the pagan countries into which the officers of the Church must enter the best way they can. But modern States are Christian in name. The greater portion of their subjects are baptized. Now baptism enrols a man among the children of the Church; and hence, in spite of their denying the claims of their true spiritual Mother,

they are, as Christian States, still bound by one obligation, viz., to refrain from establishing any law which is against the conscience of their Catholic subjects. The strength of this obligation rests upon the principle that calling themselves Christian, they cannot disregard the fundamental truth of the Christian religion, 'that man was created for eternal happiness.' 'What will it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his soul?' 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God.' These texts give us a vital principle. The members of the Catholic Church, although residing in non-Catholic countries, believe that 'if they will not hear the Church,' that is, obey the commands of that superior society established by Divine power, 'they become as the heathen,' because, *ipso facto*, they fail to seek first the 'kingdom of God.' The Christian civil State, then, is bound on its own principles to respect the consciences of, at least, all its Christian subjects. And this

respect of conscience is the one obligation which the Church still maintains a right to insist upon even in the case of modern States. It cannot be said then that the superiority of the Church over the civil State endangers the independence of the State. 'So long as princes and their laws are in conformity to the law of God, the Church has no power or jurisdiction against them, or over them.' If the civil State only keep clear of offending the consciences of its Catholic subjects, the Church, although a superior society by Divine right to all the civil societies of the whole world put together, and believed to be such by all her subjects, will not trouble modern States by the exercise of her rights. The Church will pursue her purpose, enact her laws, rule her subjects, and what is more, be obeyed by her subjects, with or without the goodwill of the civil power. She cannot be deprived of the fruit of her labours. The Church must infallibly succeed. If not at

present, she can bide her time; for with the Church, as with her Divine Spouse, 'a thousand years are but as one day, and one day as a thousand years.' When the civil power shall see the error of its ways, Holy Mother Church will gladly take that power once again beneath her sheltering care. Meanwhile, she calmly and surely labours for the accomplishment of her divine mission, a perfect society in every sense of the word, independent, superior over all, supreme, manifesting herself to be not a human craft, but the work of the right hand of the Most High.

CHAPTER V.

THE PECULIAR RIGHTS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

IT has been shown that the Church of Jesus Christ is a society in the strictest meaning of the word; that it is, to say the least, as perfect a society as the civil State, and, what is more, that it is superior to the State. Now no one will deny that the civil State has certain rights which belong to it of its very nature, of which it could not be deprived without injustice, and indeed not without dealing it a mortal blow. This is a truth everybody admits. Indeed, the

tendency of the age is to go too far in this respect. The tendency of the age is to heap all rights, titles, and prerogatives upon the State, and to raise the civil government to the rank of a deity. Of course a Catholic mind cannot run in harmony with this spirit. The Catholic mind must advance along the path traced out by God's law, and as that law is divine and perfect, it is never extreme, and is always just. And God's law teaches that as there are rights which spring from the nature of the State, so also are there rights springing from the very nature of the Church; and just as it would kill the State to deprive it of its natural rights, so would it cripple, maim, and render abortive the work of the Church to rob her of her rights. It would not kill the Church, because she is immortal. The Church of Christ is as imperishable as her Head. The Church cannot cease on earth until the consummation of all things. But strip her of her rights, and

you hinder the successful fulfilment of her mission.

We may go on even further. The superiority of the Church over the State has already been proved; and it could easily be shown that the Church's rights rest upon a higher title than do the rights of the State. The latter's rights are only natural. The Church's rights are supernatural and divine. The civil government wields power in virtue of that indirect sanction the Almighty vouchsafes to bestow upon it; the Church speaks as 'one having authority,' because of the sovereign Lord, her immediate Head and Ruler. The rights of the Church are the rights of Christ, and hence no earthly power can wantonly violate her rights and be guiltless. They are inviolable, because of the sovereign Lord from whom they flow, and for the same reason are they sacred and of dignity divine. It is plain, therefore, that for the civil State, with eyes wide open, to run counter

right and is bound to interfere; neither would it be true independence on the part of the State if it were free to disregard her voice and to legislate obstructively to the salvation of its subjects. The Church's power over spiritual things is direct and immediate. Those matters are absolutely in her own custody. In temporal matters her power is indirect and mediate, and is even here a spiritual power, although it is often called temporal because it is exercised by temporal acts. It is spiritual in its origin, springing as it does from the will of Jesus Christ, and spiritual also in its end, as aiming only at the salvation of souls. It is evident then that such a spiritual directive power in the Church does not infringe upon the independence of the State.

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eternal Father.'* The conclusion is evident. If the supreme Ruler puts a duty upon a body of men, He gives them a right to carry out that duty in the teeth of every earthly power; for all power is of God. God gives to His Church a power identical with His own, and therefore to oppress that power is to 'resist the ordinance of God.'

But although it be true that our Divine Lord puts no bounds to the right of His Church to make converts, yet, as all power comes from God, and therefore the civil power also, He, like a wise and prudent commander, takes measures to prevent any clashing of the rights of His Church with the rights of the State. He prescribes the manner in which He would have the Church carry out her enterprise. She is to enter every nation and empire, and make converts of the people: but this is to be done, not by force of arms, not by compulsion, but by the persuasive eloquence of her preaching: by the

* D. M. Liberatore's 'Inst. Philos.' iii. p. 328.

light and strength and charm of the truth she teaches. So long as the Church keeps to this kind of warfare, she is acting up to her instructions, she acts within her rights. Hence to molest her in this duty is to trample upon the rights of Jesus Christ; it is to set up human wilfulness against the will of God.

The Church of Jesus Christ has a divine right to carry the word of life, received from the lips of her Divine Founder, into every country, and city, and town, and village, and wheresoever the children of Adam have their abode. For the civil power to endeavour to hinder the Church in the exercise of this right is a crime. It is to resist God. It is to set up human against Divine authority. This, as we have said, was done when Elizabeth enacted the penal laws against priests. In course of time, however, 'the bitterness of death was past;' the civil government softened the extreme severity of the laws of Elizabeth;

it was no longer death to harbour a priest, or for a priest to administer a sacrament. Then came a further question, which, when started, produced that strange commotion throughout the land which Cardinal Newman so graphically and inimitably describes. 'Fling upon the gale,' he says, 'the faintest whisper of Catholicity, and it' (*i.e.*, the Establishment, as one of the arms of the civil power) 'recognises by instinct the presence of its connatural foe. Forthwith, as during last year, the atmosphere is tremulous with agitation, and discharges its vibrations far and wide. A movement is in birth which has no natural crisis or resolution. Spontaneously the bells of the steeples begin to sound; not by an act of volition, but by a sort of mechanical impulse—bishop and dean, archdeacon and canon, rector and curate, one after another, each on his high tower; off they set, swinging and booming, tolling and chiming, with nervous intenseness and thickening emo-

tion and deepening volume, the old ding-dong which has scared town and country this weary time; tolling and chiming away, jingling and clamouring, and ringing the changes on their poor half-dozen notes, all about "the Popish aggression," "insolent and insidious," "insidious and insolent," "atrocious, insolent, and ungrateful," "ungrateful, insolent, and atrocious," "foul and offensive," "pestilent and horrid," "subtle and unholy," "audacious and revolting," "contemptible and shameless," "malignant," "frightful," "mad," "meretricious," bobs (I think the ringers call them), bobs, and bobs royal, and triple-bob-majors, and grandsires, to the extent of their compass and the full ring of their metal, in honour of Queen Bess, and to the confusion of the Pope and the princes of the Church.' *

And why all this tumult? What was the Church about that it should give rise to so much

* 'Catholicism in England,' Lect. ii. p. 73, 1st Ed.

uneasiness? The Church was simply acting upon her right; she was putting in use one of those general rights which belong to her very nature, which Christ gave her, which no power can take from her, and which she claims and insists upon not merely in England, but throughout the whole world. And that right is worded thus: 'To the Church belongs the right to establish herself in the countries or districts where her faithful children dwell, and there to establish and unfold herself, to set up her machinery, so to speak, for the exercise of her spiritual power.'* As our Blessed Lord emphatically designates the Church as His own kingdom, in contradistinction to all other kingdoms, so did He take care to consolidate His kingdom by giving to her an organization, a form of government, a method of procedure divinely devised for this end. Baptism is the gate by which men enter the kingdom of

* Liberatore's 'Inst. Phil.' iii.

Jesus Christ. The faithful having passed through that gate, at once, as members of Christ's kingdom, are subject to the authority of the Church; they form part of the flock of Christ. Hence the Church is bound by virtue of the charge, 'Feed My lambs, feed My sheep,' to rule, govern, and direct her subjects in whatsoever part of the world they may locate themselves. But the Church cannot fulfil this her duty—that is, fulfil it according to the mind and desire of her sovereign Lord—if she is not able to establish that form of government, to employ that ecclesiastical machinery with which He has constituted her. Hence the Church has a right to erect her hierarchy, to set up her tribunals, to hold her synods, to open schools, to found colleges and convents, and especially to be free and unfettered in her communications with the Pope. She has a right to spread the faith, and needs not to sue for leave from any earthly power. The supreme Master has said

'Go,' and she dare not disobey. She has the right to unfold her organization, for the same supreme Voice has said,' Feed My lambs, feed My sheep.' And this right the Church can never lose. It can never become obsolete. No length of time can prescribe against it. Possession, in common parlance, is nine points of the law. It may be true in many cases; it can never be true where it is a question of this right of Holy Church. This right springs immediately from the command of Him whom the Scriptures style ' King of kings and Lord of lords.' Hence we see the wicked folly of those who raved against the re-establishment of the hierarchy in England, and the wickedness and madness of many modern Governments, whose policy is, by all possible means, to hinder the action of the Church—wickedness because they resist God; madness since they must eventually fail, and the Church must succeed, for 'if God be for us, who can be against us?'

CHAPTER VI.

THE ISSUE OF THE PRESENT CONFLICT.

THE attitude of the civil governments towards the Catholic Church at the present moment is, we repeat, one calculated to fill the hearts of the faithful with sorrow, yet with a sorrow that has in it not a tinge of discouragement. In Germany the antagonism of the Prussian Government seems as fierce as ever, the tyrannical laws of Dr. Falk are still in force, the contest has lasted during ten years, nor do we see in the immediate future any promise of a change for the better. In France, too, the Holy Church is in so down-trodden a position that it is a marvel to Catholics in England how, in a

country where we are assured the bulk of the population is Catholic, such a state of things can last for a day. The bitterest enemies of the Church hold the reins of government. The supreme power is exercised by men who openly profess that they mean to wipe the Church off the face of the land. The condition of the Holy Church in Italy, Portugal, Switzerland, could hardly be worse; whilst in Belgium, Spain, Austria, and indeed in every country excepting perhaps England and America, it is far from satisfactory. Christendom as our fathers knew it is a thing of the past. Whether what has been shall be again, whether the dead shall come to life, we cannot tell: all we know is that He who put sinews and flesh upon the dry bones, and breathed breath into them, and caused them to live and to stand upon their feet, an exceeding great army,* is able also to renew the dry bones of ancient Catholic Chris-

* Ezek. xxxvii.

tendom, and to make the past repeat itself, and to bring all nations into the unity of the faith and the bond of charity. To God the Mighty this is possible. Will He do it? We cannot tell. Of one thing, however, we are sure, and the intimate conviction we have of the trustworthiness of this surety enables us to say that, whilst the conflict against the Church gives us sorrow, it causes no discouragement, for we know and are certain that sooner or later the Church will be the victor. What Cardinal Newman so graphically says of the efforts made to get rid of the Church in England may be applied to all governments that wage war against her.

'She* shall be always worsted in the warfare . . . ever unhorsed and disarmed, ever running away, ever prostrated, ever smashed and pounded, ever dying, ever dead; and the only wonder is that she has to be killed so often, and the life so often to be trodden out of her, and her priests and doctors to be so often put down,

* *Catholicism* in England, 1st Ed. p. 10.

and her monks and nuns to be exposed so often, and such vast sums to be subscribed by Protestants, and such great societies to be kept up, and such millions of tracts to be written, and such persecuting Acts to be passed in Parliament, in order thoroughly, and once for all, and for the very last time, and for ever and ever, to annihilate her once more.'

It is truly a wonder, greater far than to raise the dead or bid the mountains be cast into the midst of the sea, that the Catholic Church, so weak, so defenceless, so seemingly at the mercy of the powers of this world, should dare to maintain her rights, and without weapons and without resources should match her weakness against their mightiness, and in every case should live to see the giants who strove with her dead at her feet. The fact of the case is this: the Church is immortal, her enemies are mortal; the Church is divine, her enemies human; her opponents use earthly weapons,

whilst the very helplessness of the Church is almighty strength. She is in the world, in the first place, for the salvation of individual souls; and in the second, for the good of nations. If civil governments will let her, she will work with them, as in days of old, for the welfare of their people; but if they refuse her aid, she will not therefore lay down her arms nor cease her labours, but with them or without them, she will prosecute her sacred mission for the salvation of souls. As to the issue, that is secured beforehand. Knowing the end from the beginning, the Church can afford to wait. As God is patient, so is the Church. As He sees His laws broken and His promises slighted and His threats disregarded, and still remains in perfect peace, sure that in the end His will shall be done, so likewise the Holy Church mildly bears the rebukes of her enemies, and beholds her rights outraged and her voice unheeded, and yet loses not her peace nor knows what fear is.

He that is with her is greater than he that is with the world; and her enemies shall perish, but she shall continue; and they shall grow old as a garment, and as a vesture they shall be changed; but the Church is the self-same, and her years shall not fail. An eminent writer of this century has well observed that in the buildings inaugurated by the Popes of the sixteenth century, we find a striking figure of the Church's consciousness of her own perpetuity. Men who feel that the years of their sojourn on earth are numbered, and that the power to conceive and to execute will quickly fail them, set on foot projects and promote schemes which may be begun and finished within the compass of an ordinary lifetime. The supreme Pontiffs, conscious of the imperishability of the Church, started works on a scale so grand and magnificent, that generation after generation was born and lived and died, and the scaffolding was there when they

were born, and there it stood when they died; and during all those years, the ring of the workman's hammer sounded in their ears. The Popes draw from the Church, of which they are the head, a height of conception, a grandeur of mind, and a spirit of endurance commensurate with the universality of her dominion and the imperishability of her character.

The Catholic Church, then, can afford to wait. If she does not triumph to-day, she will to-morrow; and if not then, then another day. The Prussian Government seems to have adopted the 'waiting policy.' If, however, that Government hopes to tire out the Church, it has studied the history of the past to little purpose. Less than a hundred years ago, such was the perilous position of the Church with reference to civil governments, that Lord Macaulay could write,* 'It is not strange that, in the year 1799, even sagacious observers

* Essays, Ranke's History of the Popes, p. 568.

should have thought that, at length, the hour of the Church of Rome was come. An infidel Power ascendant, the Pope dying in captivity, the most illustrious prelates of France living in a foreign country on Protestant alms, the noblest edifices which the munificence of former ages had consecrated to the worship of God turned into temples of Victory, or into banquetting-houses for political societies, or into Theophilanthropic chapels, such signs might well be supposed to indicate the approaching end of that long domination.'

The storm burst, anarchy swept over Europe with terrific irresistible strength, thrones, governments, political institutions, the fruits of hundreds of years of thought and labour, fell, dashed to pieces beneath its violence. Only one institution came forth from the day of trial —the Church Catholic and Roman could not perish.* 'It had been buried under the great

* Ibid.

inundation, but its deep foundations had remained unshaken; and when the waters abated, it appeared alone amidst the ruins of a world which had passed away. The republic of Holland was gone, and the empire of Germany, and the Great Council of Venice, and the old Helvetian League, and the House of Bourbon, and the parliaments and aristocracy of France. Europe was full of young creations, a French empire, a kingdom of Italy, a Confederation of the Rhine. . . . But the unchangeable Church was still there.' With this test of the vitality and vigour of the Church, as severe and fearful a one as ever tried her, and one so recent as to be almost within the memory of living men, we may safely assert that of all schemes concocted to effect her downfall, that of the 'waiting policy' is least likely to succeed.

Nor can we fail to see a strong corroboration of this if we cast but a glance upon the events of our own generation. For many years the statesmen and politicians, who view the Church

with dislike, have been waiting in expectation of seeing the end, and by secret plotting and by open blows have endeavoured to hasten the accomplishment of their wishes; and after all what have they gained? Cavour and Garibaldi in Italy, Gambetta in France, Palmerston in our own England—to pass over others whose names spring before the mind's eye—have dropped from the ranks of the living, are now but names of the past, and still the Church abides entrenched on all sides by sons stout of heart and strong in affection for their heavenly Mother. The unbroken front of the Catholics of Germany, the indomitable and noble spirit which inspires them, has wrested from the breast of the Iron Chancellor, Prince Bismarck, the confession that the Catholic party is an impregnable fortress which cannot be brought to capitulate. In Belgium the supreme power, lodged in the hands of the bitterest enemies of the Catholic name, is brought to bear with

galling injustice upon the brave Catholics of that country, yet every inimical movement so far has been thwarted: the Bishops and the faithful have proved equal to the contest, and as fast as the enemy pulls down the walls of Sion do they build them up again. Nor is there any sign of this steadfastness of mind relaxing. The Governments of Europe have sought to sow discord among the Bishops of the Church, and if possible to create a breach betwixt them and the Sovereign Pontiff. And with what fortune? We may safely assert that never before did the world behold the Bishops in such perfect harmony with the Pope or so firmly attached to him as at the present time. Their fealty to Christ's Vicar is unshakeable; and if it be true that unity brings strength, then is the Church strong indeed. Pope Pius IX. governed the Church over thirty years, and men waited impatiently for his death, curious as to the result, hopeful

that then the end would come, and yet fear
judging the present by the past, and never w
hopes more utterly blighted, never fears m
fully realized. Leo XIII. ascended the thr
of the Fisherman, and whilst by his wisd
and his grace he fills his children's hearts w
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and begins to draw to him hearts long estran
from the See of Peter. Meanwhile the Chu
has not ceased to work. Though the ene
has waited and plotted, she has laboured
the souls of men. And so blessed have b
her efforts in England alone that during the l
forty years, we are told, the increase of l
children has trebled that of the population.
is it now, and so will it ever be. We give bu
page of the Church's history, which has repeat
itself over and over again in the course of ag
and which is destined to repeat itself to the e
of time.

By patient suffering and waiting she triumph

over the savage tyrants of Imperial Rome; by the same policy she has weathered every storm, and has lived to see the end of all her assailants. Hence in struggling with the Church, 'to wait,' is bad policy for mortal men; it answers only for the Immortal Church.

Our certainty in the final triumph of the Church rests upon the truthfulness of God, the divine nature of the Church herself, and the experience of eighteen hundred years. Why, then, it may be asked, are we sorrowful when we see the difficulties which the Church has to contend with? We are sure of the result; why, then, be cast down? To this we reply that our grief springs from the knowledge that the Church is the choicest work of the Most High God, the Kingdom of God on earth, the Bride of Christ, and the Sacred Mother of all those whose souls have been washed by the Precious Blood through the waters of baptism. To lay hands upon her is to violate what is most dear to God. To per-

secute her is to interfere with the plan God had in view in placing her in the world. To hinder her in her work is to rob Christ of the fruits of His blood-shedding, and to deprive men of a treasure beyond price, since without it they must perish everlastingly. As sound philosophy proves a good handmaid to divine faith, as true science testifies to the truths of Revelation, so also an enlightened government should be the support and helpmate of religion. Philosophy, science, civil power, come from God, and therefore cannot be meant by Him to render abortive His noblest and most excellent gift, the grace of Redemption. Hence we find that no sooner had the Church emerged from the Catacombs, than she entered into league with the civil governments, to be to one another a mutual help, to labour hand in hand, the one in things temporal, the other in things divine. Pius IX., in the Syllabus, condemned the proposition which maintains that separation of Church and

State is the right and best order of things. After such a declaration of the Supreme Pastor, no true Catholic can hold that politics and religion ought to be utterly separate. But more recently than Pius IX., and almost while we write, the august Successor of that Venerable Pontiff lifts up his voice to teach the world that while the Church and the civil government are orders distinct in their origin and in their nature, it is the will of Heaven that religion lend its aid to the State, and that the State should support religion.*

'There are some,' writes Leo XIII., 'who are not satisfied with distinguishing between politics and religion, but separate and completely isolate the one from the other; they wish them to have nothing in common, and imagine that the one should exercise no influence over the other.' The Pope then adds the reason why such a

* Letter to Bishops of Spain, Dec. 8th, 1882. *Tablet* trans.

view of religion and politics cannot be maintained and his words at the same time express the cause of Catholic grief at the troubles of Holy Church, notwithstanding our confidence that she must in the long run conquer. 'Such men, in truth, differ but little from those who desire the exclusion of God, the Creator and Sovereign of all things, from the constitution and administration of the State; and the error they profess is the more pernicious that they thereby rashly debar the State from its most abundant source of prosperity. The moment religion is removed, those principles are of necessity shaken on which the public welfare most of all rests, and which derive their greatest force from religion, among the first of which are government with justice and moderation, obedience from a sense of duty, the submission of the passions to the yoke of virtue, to render to each his due, to leave untouched that which is another's.'

As children of the Church, then, we sorrow

when the Powers of earth rise against her. We grieve to see the civil governments hoodwinked by the father of lies, that they know not the things which are to their peace. It is a painful sight, and one that makes the Catholic heart sad, to behold the instability of governments and the bad spirit which pervades large classes of the people, and to reflect that the Holy Church, the Bride of Christ, the Mother of men and of nations, who alone holds the olive-branch, and alone is able to make wars to cease even to the ends of the earth, to break the bow and snap the weapons asunder, who alone has power to strengthen the hands of rulers, to make the people reverence the law, to breathe peace into the restless hearts of men, is treated as an enemy that must be ever suspected, check-mated, and put down at all hazards. Surely here is cause enough for grief! To molest the Catholic Church is such a calamity to kings and people, to rulers and to subjects, that

nothing else is needed to move to tears the Church's children. Moreover, it is so ungrateful a return for all the blessings the Church has brought to mankind. For what has Europe of worth or blessedness which it has not received from the Catholic Church? Let us quote from a beautiful article on Rome in one of the numbers of the *Dublin Review*, changing the name Rome into its equivalent term, the Church.

'The Church is the mother of the nations of Europe. They would not now exist had it not been for her. It was this sweet Mother who gave them birth. She saw them sitting in darkness and the shadow of death, and she had compassion on them, and guided their feet into the way of peace. She gathered them under the shadow of her wings, and watched over them with unwearied care, and told them the things that were to their peace. . . . Had she only had her way, wars would have ceased upon the earth, for she herself would have been the

arbiter of the quarrels of mankind, and would have guarded with jealousy the administration of the laws of the nations. Then would the nations themselves—the strongest with the weakest, the greatest with the least—have gathered in peace around her throne, and the vision of Isaias would have been fulfilled. "Ephraim would not have envied Juda, nor would Juda have fought against Ephraim. The sword would have been turned into the ploughshare, and the spear into the sickle: nation would not have lifted up sword against nation, neither would they have been exercised any more to war." Nay, she would have broken down the wall of separation between them; for it is the Bride of Christ, the Catholic Church, alone upon earth who has realized the truth "there is neither Greek nor Jew, barbarian nor Scythian," but that all are one in Christ; and there would have been one fold and one shepherd. But it was not to be. The nations, or some of them

at least, grew tired of her gentle sway, and jealous of the sweet supremacy of Christ's Vicar. . . . They let go her guiding hand, which had led them so faithfully along the narrow path of truth and life, and wandered, each one by itself, unguided and unblessed, far away from her into the endless wilderness of error and destruction. Yet she never forgot her love for the children she had borne to God. Again and again she sent to look after them; again and again she sought to bring them back into her arms. Against hope she believed in hope, and wrestled for them with God in prayer. And so it has come to pass (in our own country) that when all was lost she began to find; when all was destroyed, and not a stone left upon a stone, she began to build. She is now stealing her way back into the hearts of the people of England. She is ready to begin again to renew this great nation to God, to lift it up from the worship of Mammon, to burst the bands which

bind it to the worship of material wealth, prosperity, and success, and to put it on the road which leads to peace here and to everlasting peace hereafter. What she has done once she can do again. Only let her alone. Leave her in peace. Give her a fair field and no favour, and then without noise or commotion, without battle or party strife, but silently and sweetly, she will renew the face of the world, and make of the nations of Europe families of the household of God.'

We have given this long extract because it so aptly and so beautifully describes the beneficent influence of the Holy Church upon the affairs of human life. The end of civil government is to make its subjects happy and prosperous. To have prosperous subjects without the help of the Church of Christ is possible, but without that supernatural help there can be no truly happy subjects. The Church is in the world for the salvation of souls, yet in the counsels of

the Most High is she designed to soften the ills of life and to cast into the troubles and labours and sorrows of our earthly sojourn a peacefulness and a sweetness which comes from above, of which she alone has the secret, and which she alone can impart. In this our own England the sorrow of the faithful is turned into joy. The iron heel of despotism is lifted from off the neck of the Bride of Christ, and she has arisen from the dust, and has put on her beautiful garments, and become once more the fruitful mother of children. Already to thousands of hearths of Old England has the Catholic Church brought the 'peace which surpasseth all understanding.' To thousands of homes she has been the cause of untold blessings. And this she has done not by the favour of the Government, but by simply being let alone. And if without favour we find the presence of Holy Church so rich in blessings, what would it be were the throne and the legislature of one heart

and one mind with her? Who could tell the happiness of the English people were all her rulers loving faithful sons of the Church, in all things seeking not their own, but the interests of Christ and the good of souls? However, we must take the position of affairs as they stand. We are thankful for the measure of freedom vouchsafed to the Church in this country. We rejoice in the blessings that freedom brings to us her children. When we see her persecuted in other countries we are made sorrowful, and we mourn for the loss to the rulers and the people which that persecution brings. Yet, withal, we say again, the Catholic Church will eventually prove victorious. If the powers of earth refuse to hearken to her voice, let them not flatter themselves that they can drive her out of the world. Whether they employ the 'swift and the cruel' or the 'waiting policy,' she will be too much for them. She is out of reach of any weapon statesmen may form against her.

She is the Bride of Christ; she leans upon the bosom of her Beloved.* 'His left hand under her head, His right hand embraces her.' From this flows her right to treat with the 'powers that be' upon equal ground, not as a subject, not as a dependant, but rather as an Empress might treat with the ruler of a petty sovereignty. This also is the secret of her strength, the well-spring of her charms, the fount of her immortality. If she seems to yield, if she speaks as one asking a favour, if she sheathes the wisdom of the serpent with the gentleness of the dove, it is not that she is unaware of her sovereign divine rights, but she waives her rights, where that is possible without sin, for the sake of a greater good. She values more the soul of a beggar than her own dignity. What cares she for dignity and homage, if by sacrificing them she may save the souls of men? And so the Bride of Christ speaks mildly to the rough

* Canticle of Cants., viii.

powers of earth, and brooks many affronts, and suffers many wrongs, and makes herself all things to all men if by so doing she may rescue those for whom Christ died.

Nevertheless, and notwithstanding all the meekness and forbearance, the Catholic Church is the everlasting kingdom of the everlasting God, and therefore is she independent of all civil governments. The Bride of Christ can be subject to no earthly ruler. She does not depend upon them; she has no need of them, though they have need of her. Her rights are from above and indisputable. It belongs to her to subdue the whole world to her sway, nor need she sue for leave from any power. The Holy Church, in virtue of her espousals with the Head of the human race and the eternal King of heaven, is sovereign lady of all the whole earth. If the civil government respects her rights, she will be to it a loving mother and an invincible protectress, but if not, she will pursue her end

in spite of it. How, indeed, could it be that the spouse of God should need the support and guardianship of the frail arm of flesh? How could the everlasting Church lean upon the ever-changing phases of human governments? How could she rest upon the arm of the civil power? Is she not well supported? Is she not in safe keeping? God has espoused her for ever; what further prop can that Church want who is buoyed up by the 'everlasting Arms'? The kings and statesmen of the world are as much her children as the Irish peasant in his humble cottage home. Into her hands are given the world for an inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for her possession. And she will possess them. She will bring forth children *to* Jesus Christ in the four quarters of the globe, if the world shall last so long, when every vestige of the powers that now rule shall have been blotted out. Christ can never fail, nor can His wife the Church.* 'I will espouse thee to me

* Osee ii.

for ever.' Neither can she lose her beauty. Age can lay no hand upon her; years can draw no wrinkles in her brow; heresy cannot stain her, nor can schism rend her; through the rise and fall of nations, the tottering of thrones, the rebellions of people, the exploits of armies; though men wither away for fear; though the sun be darkened, and the moon give no light, and the stars fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens be moved, the Bride of Christ abides untouched. Amid the crash of ruined worlds, she rests in perfect peace, youthful and beautiful as ever, upon the bosom of her Beloved, His left hand under her head, His right hand encircling her.

THE END.

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